

I/WE CLAIM:

1. A cooking appliance comprising:
 - an oven cavity adapted to receive a food item to be exposed to a cooking operation;
 - a microwave generator adapted to emit an RF energy field into the oven cavity to selectively perform at least a portion of the cooking operation;
 - an electric heating element positioned to heat the oven cavity during the cooking operation;
 - a heating element support bracket including first and second mounting surface portions interconnected through a web portion, said web portion including at least one heating element receiving journal within which the heating element is positioned, and an edge portion, along which are arranged a plurality of substantially circular lances defining a bore; and
 - a mechanical fastener extending through the bore for mounting the support bracket, with the mechanical fastener providing an electrical ground and, in combination with the support bracket, an RF energy shield for the heating element.
2. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, wherein the at least one heating element receiving journal includes a first receiving journal and a second receiving journal, said second receiving journal being spaced from the first receiving journal by an intermediate member, said heating element including first and second coils supported in the first and second receiving journals respectively.

3. The cooking appliance according to claim 2, wherein the heating element constitutes a sheathed resistance-type heating element.
4. The cooking appliance according to claim 2, wherein the intermediate member includes a crimp element which clamps the heating element within the at least one heating element receiving journal.
5. The cooking appliance according to claim 4, wherein the crimp element is defined by a V-shape notch formed in the intermediate portion, said V-shaped notch defining first and second crimp fingers, said crimp fingers being adapted to maintain the first and second coils within the first and second receiving journals respectively.
6. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, further comprising: a shoulder member arranged within the at least one heating element receiving journal, said shoulder member providing a snap-fit for the heating element.
7. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, further comprising: a forced air convection system including a housing, a convection fan positioned in the housing, and the heating element, said convection fan being adapted to direct a flow of convection air over the heating element and into the oven cavity to perform a portion of the cooking process.
8. The cooking appliance according to claim 7, wherein the heating element support bracket mounts the heating element within the housing.

9. The cooking appliance according to claim 8, further comprising: an air inlet opening into the housing, with the air inlet being located on a side of the convection fan opposite to the oven cavity.

10. The cooking appliance according to claim 1, wherein the heating element support bracket is formed from a single piece of metal which is folded to define the plurality of substantially circular lances along an edge portion of the heating element support bracket.

11. A cooking appliance comprising:

- an oven cavity adapted to receive a food item to be exposed to a cooking operation;

- a microwave generator adapted to emit an RF energy field into the oven cavity to selectively perform at least a portion of the cooking operation;

- an electric heating element positioned to heat the oven cavity during the cooking operation;

- a heating element support bracket including first and second mounting surface portions interconnected through a web portion, said web portion including at least one heating element receiving journal within which the heating element is positioned, and an edge portion, formed from a single piece of metal which is bent to define two side portions and an edge portion, with said edge portion defining a bore; and

- a mechanical fastener extending through the bore for mounting the support bracket, with the mechanical fastener providing an electrical ground and, in combination with the support bracket, an RF energy shield for the heating element.

12. The cooking appliance according to claim 11, wherein the at least one heating element receiving journal includes a first receiving journal and a second receiving journal, said second receiving journal being spaced from the first receiving journal by an intermediate member, said heating element including first and second coils supported in the first and second receiving journal respectively.

13. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, wherein the heating element constitutes a sheathed resistance-type heating element.

14. The cooking appliance according to claim 12, wherein the intermediate member includes a crimp element which clamps the heating element within the at least one heating element receiving journal.

15. The cooking appliance according to claim 14, wherein the crimp element is defined by a V-shape notch formed in the intermediate portion, said V-shaped notch defining first and second crimp fingers, said crimp fingers being adapted to maintain the first and second coils within the first and second receiving journals respectively.

16. The cooking appliance according to claim 11, further comprising: a shoulder member arranged within the at least one heating element receiving journal, said shoulder member providing a snap-fit for the heating element.

17. The cooking appliance according to claim 11, further comprising: a forced air convection system including a housing, a convection fan positioned in the housing, and the heating element, said convection fan

being adapted to direct a flow of convection air over the heating element and into the oven cavity to perform a portion of the cooking process.

18. The cooking appliance according to claim 17, wherein the heating element support bracket mounts the heating element within the housing.

19. The cooking appliance according to claim 18, further comprising: an air inlet opening into the housing, with the air inlet being located on a side of the convection fan opposite to the oven cavity.

20. The cooking appliance according to claim 11, wherein the heating element support is formed from a single piece of metal, including two portions which are folded to define a plurality of substantially circular lances, said bore being defined by the plurality of substantially circular lances.